

REMARKS

Translation of Priority Document

The Examiner has requested a translation of the Priority Document to determine whether a priority claim is justified.

Applicant has enclosed herewith a translation of the Priority Document, Italian Patent Application No. TO2002A000622 filed on July 16, 2002. The text of the translated Priority Document corresponds with the text of the present patent application.

An incorrect drawing was filed with the original Priority Document. The Italian priority application was then amended to correct the drawing.

Applicant submits that the present application is still entitled to the original priority date of July 16, 2002 because the text of the present application corresponds with the translation of the text of the Italian priority application, No. TO2002A000622 filed on July 16, 2002.

Information Disclosure Statement

The Information Disclosure Statement Form PTO-1449 included with the Examiner's Office Action and showing a filing date of January 24, 2005 and the inventor name of Qishou Xu, et al. and with a received stamp showing the date May 16, 2005 was accidentally filed under the present application number by the Ladas & Parry firm and was intended for Application No. 10/522,110 (copy

enclosed). That Information Disclosure Statement is thus of no consequence in this file. The Information Disclosure Statement filed on January 14, 2005 with the present application and which the Examiner acknowledged on June 6, 2006 was correct.

Specification

The Examiner objected to the specification because the claims refer to character 34 as a "bearing," and the specification refers to character 34 as a "bushing."

Applicant notes that Page 6, lines 19-20, state that the bushing 34 has the function of a bearing. There is thus sufficient antecedent basis for the use of "bearing" for the character 34 in the claims. One skilled in the art will also appreciate that a bushing is a type of bearing. Bearings are generally grouped into journal bearings, or bushings, and roller bearings.

Applicant, accordingly, respectfully requests withdrawal of the objections to the specification under this heading.

35 U.S.C. § 103 Rejections

The Examiner has rejected claims 1 and 2 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Morr in view of Riu.

Applicant believes that the Examiner's claim rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) are incorrect, because the Examiner is construing claim terms more broadly than allowed by the usual technical meaning. For example, it is highly questionable that the Examiner indicates member 12" of Morr as anticipating the inner annular flange (17) of the present invention as claimed. Member 12" is the end portion of a tubular wall, and therefore not a flange. Applicant has amended claim 1 in order to better distinguish the present invention from the cited prior art.

As acknowledged by the Examiner, Morr fails to disclose a coupling flange provided with an inner annular wall bearing axially against the hub flange and with a peripheral axial edge. However, Morr also fails to disclose that the pulley has an inner annular flange (as now better defined), and that the first elastomeric ring is connected axially between the hub flange and the inner flange of the pulley.

The Examiner states that it would have been obvious for one skilled in the art to modify the Morr assembly in view of Riu to "provide a coupling flange with an inner annular wall bearing axially against said flange of the hub, as taught by Riu, for the purpose of providing a covering for the elastic ring."

Applicant respectfully disagrees. The purpose of the coupling flange is not to provide a "covering for the elastic ring" as stated by the Examiner, but rather to connect the elastomeric ring to the hub.

In fact, the first elastomeric ring 10" of Morr (see Figure 4) is radially coupled to a cylindrical wall 5" of hub 2" and to inner cylindrical wall 8" of pulley 7". The radial connection between elastomeric ring 10" and wall 8" is an essential teaching of Morr, because the object of Morr is to make bushing 9" in a single piece with the elastomeric ring 10", which, of course, is only possible if the elastomeric ring is radially coupled to wall 8".

If a coupling flange was provided, as taught by Riu, it would be completely useless in the context of the disclosure of Morr. In order to obtain the present invention as claimed, Morr should be modified to provide the pulley with an inner annular flange and to couple the elastomeric ring axially to the pulley inner annular flange and to the coupling flange. But this arrangement, as stated above, would be contrary to the essential teaching of Morr, and therefore the modification would not be obvious.

Applicant, accordingly, respectfully submits that claim 1 is patentable over Morr in view of Riu. Claim 2 depends from claim 1 and should be allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

Applicant, accordingly, respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1 and 2 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Morr in view of Riu.

Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite

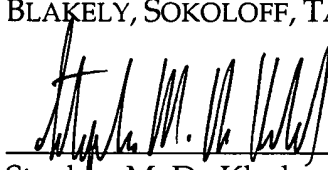
or assist in the allowance of the present application, the Examiner is invited to call Stephen M. De Klerk at (408) 720-8300.

Please charge any shortages and credit any overages to Deposit Account No. 02-2666. Any necessary extension of time for response not already requested is hereby requested. Please charge any corresponding fee to Deposit Account No. 02-2666.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: November 27, 2006



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